

Remarks

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding office action is respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 17, 24, 48, and 50-56 are hereby canceled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in one or more related applications. Claims 1-5, 13-16, 20-23, 44-47, and 57-68 are hereby amended. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added by way of these amendments. Claims 26-42 were previously canceled, so that claims 1-5, 7-16, 18-23, 25, 43-47, 49, and 57-68 are now currently pending.

The objection to claims 1-25 and 43-68 for being drawn to non-elected inventions is respectfully traversed in view of the above amendments.

The rejection of claims 1-25 and 43-68 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (2nd para.) for indefiniteness is respectfully traversed in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. With respect to applicants' previously submitted amendments (dated March 23, 2006), the Examiner has taken the position that applicants have not defined "similar" in regards to nucleotide or amino acid sequences and, therefore, one skilled in the art would not be apprised of the metes and bounds of the term "similar" (*see* page 4, Office Action, mailed June 14, 2006). In the present amendments to the claims, applicants have deleted the term "similar" and substituted it with the term "sequence homology." Applicants respectfully submit that this term is well known in the relevant art, such that a skilled artisan would readily understand the metes and bounds of all claims reciting the term "sequence homology." Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-25 and 43-68 for indefiniteness is improper and should be withdrawn.

The rejection of claims 1-25 and 43-68 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (1st para.) for lack of an adequate written description is respectfully traversed in view of the above amendments.

The rejection of claims 1-25 and 43-68 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (1st para.) for lack of enablement is respectfully traversed in view of the above amendments.

In view of all of the foregoing, applicants submit that this case is in condition for allowance and such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: **November 7, 2006**

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